

# NTSB Recommendation A-83-079

Page 1 of 2

**Rec #:** A-83-079  
**NTSB Status:** Closed - Acceptable Action  
**Issue date:** 10/31/1983  
**Accident Date:** 6/2/1983  
**Source Event:** ACCIDENT  
**Location:** CINCINNATI Ohio

**Mode:** AVIATION  
**Most Wanted List:** No  
**Closed date:** 10/27/1986  
**Report Number:** AAR-84-09  
**Accident ID:** DCA83AA028

## **Background Synopsis:**

THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD IS CONTINUING ITS INVESTIGATION OF THE ACCIDENT INVOLVING AIR CANADA FLIGHT 797 WHICH OCCURRED ON JUNE 2, 1983, WHEN THE FLIGHTCREW OF THE MCDONNELL DOUGLAS DC-9 AIRPLANE WAS FORCED TO MAKE AN EMERGENCY LANDING AT THE GREATER CINCINNATI AIRPORT BECAUSE OF AN IN-FLIGHT FIRE. THE INTERIOR MATERIALS OF THE AIRPLANE'S CABIN CONTINUED TO BURN AFTER THE LANDING. FIVE CREWMEMBERS AND 18 PASSENGERS WERE ABLE TO EVACUATE THE BURNING CABIN; THE REMAINING 23 PASSENGERS DIED IN THE FIRE. THE SAFETY BOARD'S INVESTIGATION HAS DETERMINED THAT THE FIRE BEGAN IN THE AIRPLANE'S LEFT REAR LAVATORY, BUT THE SOURCE OF IGNITION HAS NOT YET BEEN IDENTIFIED. TO PROMOTE A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM TO ADDRESS THE POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS SITUATION POSED BY IN-FLIGHT FIRES, THE SAFETY BOARD IS ISSUING NEW SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS RATHER THAN REITERATING RELEVANT SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS PREVIOUSLY ISSUED TO THE FAA.

## **Recommendation:**

THE NTSB RECOMMENDS THAT THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION: EXPEDITE THE RULEMAKING ACTION TO REQUIRE AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE THAT CABIN EMERGENCY LIGHTING BE INSTALLED FOR OPTIMUM EFFECTIVENESS DURING PASSENGER EVACUATION FROM SMOKE-FILLED CABINS.

## **Correspondence:**

Response Date: 1/27/1984 From: Addressee

Response:

FAA COMMENT: WE CONSIDER THIS RECOMMENDATION INAPPROPRIATE IN VIEW OF THE RULEMAKING EFFORT WHICH HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. ON OCTOBER 11 THE FAA PUBLISHED NPRM NO. 83-15 IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER FOR PUBLIC COMMENT. THE NPRM PROPOSES NEW PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR FLOOR PROXIMITY EMERGENCY ESCAPE PATH MARKINGS TO PROVIDE VISUAL GUIDANCE FOR EMERGENCY CABIN EVACUATION WHEN ALL SOURCES OF CABIN LIGHTING MORE THAN 4 FEET ABOVE THE AISLE FLOOR ARE TOTALLY OBSCURED BY SMOKE. THE PROPOSAL WOULD MAKE THE STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO FUTURE TYPE CERTIFICATION OF TRANSPORT CATEGORY AIRPLANES AND AIRPLANES TYPE CERTIFIED AFTER JANUARY 1, 1958, AND OPERATING UNDER 14 CFR 121. THESE PROPOSED STANDARDS ARE INTENDED TO IMPROVE AIRCRAFT FIRE SAFETY AND

## **NTSB Recommendation A-83-079**

Page 2 of 2

WOULD BE IN ADDITION TO THE EMERGENCY LIGHTING STANDARDS CURRENTLY IN THE CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS. THE CLOSING DATE FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS IS FEBRUARY 8, 1984. WE WILL NOTIFY THE BOARD AFTER OUR REVIEW OF THE COMMENTS.

Response Date: 7/9/1984 From: NTSB

Response:

The proposed rule changes regarding the floor proximity emergency escape path markings in NPRM 83-15 have been reviewed by the Safety Board. These proposed changes to 14 CFR 25 and 121 present a reasonable approach to the problem of emergency lighting in a smoke-filled cabin environment. Since the Safety Board essentially supports NPRM 83-15, this Safety Recommendation will be classified as "Open--Acceptable Action" pending our review of the final rule as promulgated.

Response Date: 7/28/1986 From: Addressee

Response:

ENCLOSED FOR THE BOARD'S INFORMATION IS A COPY OF A FINAL RULE, DOCKET NO. 23792; AMENDMENT NOS. 25-58 AND 121-183, THAT WAS PUBLISHED IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER ON 10/26/84, AND BECAME EFFECTIVE ON 11/26/84. THESE AMENDMENTS ESTABLISH NEW PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR FLOOR PROXIMITY EMERGENCY ESCAPE PATH MARKINGS TO PROVIDE VISUAL GUIDANCE FOR EMERGENCY CABIN EVACUATION WHEN ALL SOURCES OF CABIN LIGHTING MORE THAN 4 FEET ABOVE THE AISLE FLOOR ARE TOTALLY OBSCURED BY SMOKE. THESE AMENDMENTS MAKE THE STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO FUTURE TYPE CERTIFICATION OF TRANSPORT CATEGORY AIRPLANES AND, AFTER 11/26/86, TO AIRPLANES TYPE CERTIFICATED AFTER 1/1/58, AND OPERATING UNDER 14 CFR PART 121. THESE STANDARDS REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN AIRCRAFT CABIN SAFETY AND ARE IN ADDITION TO THE EMERGENCY LIGHTING STANDARDS CURRENTLY IN THE REGULATIONS.

Response Date: 10/27/1986 From: NTSB

Response:

The Safety Board has reviewed the amendment of 14 CFR Parts 25 and 121 which provides new performance standards for floor proximity emergency escape markings to provide visual guidance for emergency evacuation in the event of ceiling lighting being obscured by smoke. Although the Safety Board continues to believe that the requirement for escape path marking should specify a minimum level of illumination, the Board acknowledges that the regulations, as amended, otherwise comply with the intent of the recommendation. Therefore, Safety Recommendation A-83-79 has been classified as "Closed--Acceptable Action."